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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/53/613)*]

53/198. Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 50/107 of 20 December 1995 and 52/193 and 52/194 of 18 December 1997 relating to the observance of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty and the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997–2006) and all of its other resolutions relating to international cooperation for the eradication of poverty in the developing countries,

Recalling also the declarations and programmes of action of the United Nations major conferences and summit conferences in the 1990s as they relate to the eradication of poverty,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997–2006)[1] and the report of the United Nations Development Programme, *Overcoming Human Poverty*,[2]

Expressing its concern that the total number of people living in poverty is still increasing, especially in developing countries, and that a large majority of them are women and children,

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[1] A/53/329.

[2] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.III.B.2.

Recognizing that, while the rates of poverty in some countries have been reduced, some developing countries and disadvantaged groups are being marginalized while others are at risk of being marginalized and effectively excluded from the benefits of globalization, thereby constraining efforts to eradicate poverty,

Expressing its concern that the financial crisis has aggravated the existing poverty in the countries affected and placed a large number of people once again in conditions of poverty in the developing countries affected either directly or indirectly by the crisis,

Recognizing that, while it is the primary responsibility of States to attain social development, the international community should support the efforts of the developing countries in eradicating poverty and ensuring basic social protection,

Noting the decisions, measures and actions taken to eradicate poverty by countries and by organizations, agencies, funds, programmes and bodies of the United Nations system, including the World Bank, as well as by civil society, including non-governmental organizations, within the framework of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty,

1. *Reiterates* that the main objective of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty is to achieve the goal of eradicating absolute poverty and reducing overall poverty substantially in the world through decisive national action and international cooperation;

2. *Calls* for strengthened efforts at all levels to implement fully and effectively the relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations and all agreements and commitments agreed upon at United Nations major conferences and summit conferences organized since 1990 as they relate to the eradication of poverty, with a view to achieving the objectives of the Decade as early as possible;

3. *Reaffirms* that, within the context of overall action for the eradication of poverty, special attention should be given to the multidimensional nature of poverty and the national and international framework conditions and policies that are conducive to its eradication by fostering, *inter alia*, the social and economic integration of people living in poverty, thus empowering them to participate in decision-making on policies that affect them, the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including the right to development, and an efficient, transparent and accountable public service and administration;

4. *Reaffirms also* that the causes of poverty should be addressed in the context of sectoral strategies, such as those on environment, food security, population, migration, health, shelter and human resources development, including education, fresh water, rural development and productive employment, and of the specific needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, in such a way as to increase opportunities and choices for people living in poverty and enable them to build their strength and assets so as to achieve social and economic integration;

5. *Stresses* the importance of tackling the root causes of poverty and the necessity of meeting the basic needs of all, and in this context emphasizes the fundamental role in the eradication of poverty of economic growth that favours the poor and creates employment and promotes equitable income distribution;

6. *Recognizes* that the process of globalization brings with it opportunities but also poses new challenges, in particular for the developing countries and the least developed among them, in their efforts to eradicate poverty;

7. *Recognizes also* the importance of appropriate policy responses to the challenges of globalization at the national level, in particular by pursuing sound and stable domestic policies, including, *inter alia*, sound macroeconomic and social policies, so as to realize the objective of the eradication of poverty;

8. *Calls* for continued action by the international community to create an enabling economic environment and to assist developing countries further in their efforts to combat the negative impact of globalization, to fight marginalization and to pursue their development;

9. *Reaffirms* that all Governments and the United Nations system, in particular the relevant funds, programmes and agencies, should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective and use gender analysis as a tool for the integration of a gender dimension into the planning and implementation of policies, strategies and programmes on the eradication of poverty;

10. *Emphasizes* that, in developing countries, rural development remains central to efforts to eradicate poverty and that this often includes agrarian reform, investment in infrastructure, extension of rural financial intermediation, measures to ensure food security, the provision of better education, greater utilization of appropriate technology, fair prices to provide incentives for agricultural investment and increased productivity, including productivity in the informal sector;

11. *Emphasizes also* that, in all countries, urban poverty should be addressed, *inter alia*, by promoting sustainable livelihoods for people living in urban poverty through the provision or expansion of access to training, education and other employment assistance services, in particular for women, youth, the unemployed and the underemployed;

12. *Welcomes* the fact that a considerable number of countries have formulated plans and programmes to fight poverty, and in this context notes the efforts made to achieve the target of reducing by one half, by 2015, the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, and invites all Governments that have not yet done so to formulate or strengthen integrated poverty eradication policies and implement national poverty eradication plans or programmes, in a participatory manner, in order to address the structural cause of poverty, encompassing action at the local, national, subregional, regional and international levels, and stresses that those plans or programmes should establish, taking into account specific national circumstances, strategies, including affordable time-bound goals and targets, for the substantial reduction of overall poverty and the eradication of absolute poverty;

13. *Calls upon* the developed countries to strengthen their efforts to achieve, as soon as possible, the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for overall official development assistance and, where agreed, within that target, to earmark 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national product for the least developed countries;

14. *Calls upon* the international community, including multilateral financial institutions, to implement fully and effectively all initiatives taken regarding debt relief for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, and thus support their efforts to eradicate poverty;

15. *Emphasizes* the importance of increasing the control of the poor over resources, including land, skills, knowledge, capital and social connections;

16. *Emphasizes also* the role of microcredit as an important anti-poverty tool that promotes the generation of productive self-employment and empowers people living in poverty, especially women, and therefore encourages Governments to adopt policies that support the development of microcredit institutions and their capacities, and calls upon the international community, in particular the relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and international and regional financial institutions involved in the eradication of poverty, to support and to explore the incorporation of the microcredit approach in their programmes and the further development, as appropriate, of other microfinance instruments;

17. *Welcomes* the initiative taken by the Economic and Social Council to strengthen coordination for an integrated implementation of the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summit conferences in the 1990s, where the eradication of poverty had been a cross-cutting theme;

18. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts made within the United Nations system to enhance inter-agency coordination among relevant organizations, funds and programmes and the Bretton Woods institutions for the integrated follow-up to the United Nations major conferences and summit conferences, including the adoption by the Administrative Committee on Coordination of the statement of commitment for action to eradicate poverty,[3] and encourages those agencies to take more effective action in support of Member States in their efforts to achieve the objectives of the Decade;

19. *Reiterates its call* to all donors to give high priority to the eradication of poverty in their development assistance programmes, on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis, and invites the relevant funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system to support developing countries, in particular African countries and the least developed countries, in their efforts to achieve the overall goal of eradicating absolute poverty, to reduce substantially overall poverty and to ensure basic social services, by supporting national efforts to formulate, coordinate, implement, monitor and assess integrated poverty strategies, including capacity-building, and by supporting efforts to empower people living in poverty;

20. *Notes with appreciation* all initiatives aimed at or contributing to the eradication of poverty that have been undertaken by countries and international organizations, and encourages continuous action and further cooperation among the various initiatives;

21. *Reaffirms* the importance of agreeing on a mutual commitment between interested developed and developing country partners to allocate, on average, 20 per cent of official development assistance and 20 per cent of the national budget, respectively, to basic social programmes, and welcomes the efforts made to implement the 20/20 initiative, which emphasizes that promoting access for all to basic social services is essential for sustainable and equitable development and is an integral part of the strategy for the eradication of poverty;[4]

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[3] See TD/B/EX(18)/INF.1.

[4] See *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I.

22. *Decides* that the themes for the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty in 1999 and 2000 shall be, respectively, "Women and the eradication of poverty" and "Globalization and the eradication of poverty";

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-fourth session on progress made in the implementation of measures, recommendations and activities related to the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, including recommendations for possible action and initiatives towards the new millennium and proposals for better coordination of action taken by the United Nations system;

24. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997–2006)".

91st plenary meeting
15 December 1998